

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

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TO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN, CI

SUBJECT: LETELIER/MOFFITT ASSASSINATION INVESTIGATION:
PRESS STATEMENT - MARCH 10, 1978

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PRESS STATEMENT POSTED AT
STATE DEPARTMENT AT 5 P.M., MARCH 10:

IN RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CHILE,
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, DEPARTMENT
OF JUSTICE AND FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION MET
MARCH 9 WITH A SPECIAL DELEGATION OF CHILEAN OFFICIALS,
LED BY UNDER SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR, COLONEL ENRIQUE
MONTERO, TO DISCUSS THE INVESTIGATION OF THE MURDERS IN
SEPTEMBER 1976 OF ORLANDO LETELIER AND RONNIE MOFFITT.
ON MARCH 10 THE DELEGATION MET WITH UNDER SECRETARY FOR
POLITICAL AFFAIRS, PHILIP HABIB, OTHER DEPARTMENT
OFFICIALS AND THE ASSISTANT U.S. ATTORNEY, EUGENE M.
PROPPER.

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THE CHILEAN DELEGATION REITERATED THAT IT IS PREPARED
TO GIVE FULL COOPERATION TO THE INVESTIGATION BY THE
UNITED STATES AUTHORITIES. AT THE SUGGESTION OF THE
CHILEAN GOVERNMENT, THE REQUEST OF THE ASSISTANT U.S.
ATTORNEY FOR TESTIMONY FROM PERSONS IN CHILE HAS BEEN
PRESENTED IN THE FORM OF LETTERS ROGATORY, IN ACCORDANCE
WITH CHILEAN LAW. THESE LETTERS ARE NOW IN THE HANDS

OF THE DESIGNATED CHILEAN CRIMINAL COURT, AND COLONEL MONTERO INDICATED HIS GOVERNMENT AND THE CHILEAN JUDICIARY ARE PROCEEDING WITH THE MATTER AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE. HE EXPLAINED THAT AT THE REQUEST OF THE PRESIDENT OF CHILE, A JUDGE OF THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS BEEN APPOINTED BY THE SUPREME COURT TO INVESTIGATE THE ISSUANCE OF OFFICIAL CHILEAN PASSPORTS TO TWO PERSONS WHOSE TESTIMONY IS SOUGHT IN CONNECTION WITH THE MURDERS OF ORLANDO LETELIER AND RONNIE MOFFITT.

THE UNDER SECRETARY AND OTHER U.S. OFFICIALS EXPRESSED APPRECIATION TO THE DELEGATION FOR ITS OFFER OF COOPERATION, REITERATED THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH THE UNITED STATES VIEWS THE MATTER AND THE EXPECTATION THAT THE CHILEAN AUTHORITIES WILL HELP THE U.S. AUTHORITIES BRING THE INVESTIGATION OF THESE MURDERS TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION. VANCE

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